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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VATICAN 002229

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (SUBJECT)

DEPT. FOR EUR/WE (MENNUITI), EUR/OHI (AMBASSADOR BINDENAGEL)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/08/2012

TAGS: [FR](#) [GM](#) [IT](#) [KNAR](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [GM](#) [IT](#) [KNAR](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [VT](#) [VTFR](#)

SUBJECT: HOLOCAUST ENVOY'S VATICAN FAREWELL CALL

REF: 01 VATICAN 06619

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR NICHOLSON. REASONS 1.5 (B,D)

[11.](#) (C) SUMMARY: U.S. SPECIAL ENVOY FOR HOLOCAUST ISSUES AMBASSADOR BINDENAGEL MET WITH VATICAN OFFICIALS APRIL 26 FOR
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A LAST UPDATE ON THE ISSUE OF ACCESS TO PONTIFICAL ARCHIVES FOR RESEARCH RELATED TO THE SHOAH AND THE PONTIFICATE OF PIUS XII. HE MET SEPARATELY WITH VATICAN DFM MSGR. MIGLIORE AND CARDINAL KASPAR, HEAD OF THE VATICAN'S COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH JUDAISM. BOTH NOTED GRADUAL HEADWAY, YET ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THE SETBACK OF THE 2001 BREAKDOWN OF THE JEWISH-VATICAN COMMISSION TO STUDY PIUS XII'S WWII ROLE. KASPAR NARRATED HIS EFFORTS TO FOUND A NEW COMMISSION BASED ON COLLABORATION BETWEEN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS THAT WOULD MARGINALIZE INVOLVEMENT BY THE VATICAN AND THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS. KASPAR AND MIGLIORE DENOUNCED A RESURGENT ANTI-SEMITISM, NURTURED IN THEIR OPINION BY THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS, AND ALSO VOICED CONCERN AT THE APRIL 21 FRENCH ELECTION RESULTS. END SUMMARY.

[12.](#) (U) AMBASSADOR J.D. BINDENAGEL, SPECIAL ENVOY FOR HOLOCAUST ISSUES, MET SEPARATELY APRIL 26 AT THE VATICAN WITH DFM CELESTINO MIGLIORE AND CARDINAL WALTAR KASPAR, HEAD OF THE COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH JUDAISM. POLOFF ATTENDED BOTH MEETINGS AS NOTETAKER; MSGR. FUMAGELLI ACCOMPANIED CARDINAL KASPAR.

[13.](#) (C) CARDINAL KASPAR NOTED THAT THE ACTS OF THE BERLIN NUNCIATURE UP TO 1939, COVERING THE REIGN OF PIUS XI, WOULD BE ACCESSIBLE IN 2003. ALTHOUGH THESE WOULD NOT INCLUDE DOCUMENTS FROM THE PAPACY OF PIUS XII, THEY HAVE SPECIAL RELEVANCE GIVEN THE ROLE OF EUGENIO PACELLI, THE FUTURE PIUS XII, AS NUNCIO IN BERLIN AND LATER SECRETARY OF STATE UNDER PIUS XI. YET KASPAR STATED HE WAS UNABLE TO ACCELERATE THE TIMETABLE FOR OPENING THE VATICAN ARCHIVES FOR THE REIGN OF PIUS XII, CURRENTLY ANTICIPATED ABOUT 2010 (REF). NOT ONLY
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WERE THOSE ARCHIVES IN EXTREME DISORDER -- A "DURCHEINANDER" HE DECLARED IN GERMAN -- AND IN NEED OF PAINSTAKING REVIEW, BUT THESE ARCHIVES WERE THE DOMAIN OF THE VATICAN SECRETARIAT AND NOT THE COUNCIL FOR RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS. HE REMARKED THE SECRETARIAT HOLDS NO FEAR OF THE HISTORICAL VERDICT, HOWEVER WORK MUST PROCEED METHODICALLY. KASPAR COMMENTED THAT SINCE HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION ENTAILED MAKING JUDGMENTS AND NOT SIMPLY ASCERTAINING FACTS, THERE WOULD ALWAYS BE SOME DISAGREEMENT. EARLIER MIGLIORE, TOO, HAD SPOKEN SIMILARLY, OPINING THAT IDEOLOGICAL CONCERNS WERE GUIDING MANY RESEARCHERS. MIGLIORE DECRIED THE RECENT COSTA-GRAVAS FILM "AMEN" FOR ITS LACK OF CONCERN FOR HISTORICAL TRUTH.

[14.](#) (C) KASPAR LAMENTED THE 2001 BREAKDOWN OF THE JEWISH-VATICAN COMMISSION ESTABLISHED IN 1999 TO ASSESS THE 12 VOLUME SET OF HOLY SEE ARCHIVAL MATERIALS RELATING TO THE WWII PAPACY OF PIUS XII AND THE HOLOCAUST. THAT COMMISSION LOOKED GOOD ON PAPER, HE STATED, YET ITS EXECUTION WAS DEEPLY FLAWED, CITING THE LACK OF SHARED CRITERIA, THE WANT OF MUTUAL TRUST, AND THE UNHELPFUL RECOURSE BY INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS TO THE MEDIA. HE ALSO FAULTED THE COMMISSION FOR ITS FAILURE TO INCLUDE A EUROPEAN HISTORIAN, GIVEN THAT THE HOLOCAUST WAS FUNDAMENTALLY A EUROPEAN AFFAIR. KASPAR DISAVOWED ANY BLAME FOR THE BREAKDOWN, BUT EMPHASIZED THE COMMISSION WAS FRAGILE FROM THE START. KASPAR HAS SINCE SOUGHT TO ESTABLISH A NEW COMMISSION THAT WOULD PROCEED ON AN ACADEMIC PLANE, AS A COOPERATIVE EFFORT BETWEEN TEL AVIV AND FRANKFURT UNIVERSITIES, IN PLACE OF THE PREVIOUS VATICAN-WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS DRIVEN COMMISSION. HIS PROJECT FOUNDERED, ACCORDING TO KASPAR, WHEN TEL AVIV SOUGHT NEW CONDITIONS BEYOND KASPAR'S AUTHORIZATION, MOST NOTABLY THE
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INCLUSION OF NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, ALLEGEDLY DUE TO PRESSURE BY TEL AVIV'S U.S. FINANCIAL BACKERS.

[15.](#) (C) BOTH KASPAR AND MIGLIORE DECRIED THE APRIL 21 ELECTORAL SUCCESS OF FRENCH NATIONAL LEADER JEAN-MARIE LE

PEN, A REPUTED ANTI-SEMITES. KASPAR, IN PARTICULAR, REPEATEDLY DECLARED HIS REVULSION, AND DELIVERED AN IMPASSIONED DENUNCIATION OF ANTI-SEMITISM, IN WHICH HE REITERATED THE CENTRALITY OF JUDAISM TO CHRISTIANITY -- "OUR ELDER BROTHER IN THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM" IN THE WORDS OF JOHN PAUL II -- AND OF JUDAISM TO EUROPEAN CULTURE. "WITHOUT JUDAISM YOU CANNOT EVEN SPEAK OF CULTURE IN BERLIN AND VIENNA," KASPAR REMARKED, ADDED THAT IN HIS YOUTH HE HIMSELF HAD BEEN ABSORBED BY THE THOUGHT OF JEWISH PHILOSOPHER MARTIN BUBER.

16. (C) MIGLIORE LINKED RESURGENT EUROPEAN ANTI-SEMITISM TO FALLOUT FROM DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, A VIEW KASPAR SHARED IN PRINCIPLE, ALTHOUGH THE CARDINAL TOOK EXPLICIT CARE TO CONDEMN PALESTINIAN HOMICIDAL BOMBERS AS WELL AS ISRAELI ACTIONS IN BETHLEHEM.

17. (C) COMMENT: DFM MIGLIORE'S REMARKS REVEAL THAT THE VATICAN MFA NOW VIEWS THE ARCHIVAL DISPUTE AS A QUESTION OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE, A NUISANCE THAT PALES IN RELATION TO

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ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	COR-01	NP-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00
	PERC-00	DS-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	VCE-00	NSAE-00
	CAEX-01	SSO-00	SS-00	EPAE-00	DSCC-00	LBA-00	DRL-02
	SAS-00	/004W					

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FM AMEMBASSY VATICAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

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ENDURING CONCERNS ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT. CARDINAL KASPAR, ON THE OTHER HAND, SEEMED MORE AT EASE WITH THE SUBJECT, WHICH HE VIEWS IN THE CONTEXT OF A COMMITMENT TO JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RECONCILIATION. KASPAR BELIEVES THE VATICAN HAS TAKEN IMPORTANT AND IRREVERSIBLE STEPS FORWARD TO DEFUSE THE ARCHIVAL DISPUTE, YET HE IS EVIDENTLY DISAPPOINTED AT THE
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PERCEIVED LACK OF RECIPROCAL GESTURES; HE APPEALED CONTINUALLY FOR THE NEED FOR MUTUAL TRUST IN ORDER TO ADVANCE FURTHER. KASPAR, WHO BRIEFLY TAUGHT IN THE U.S. AS A GUEST PROFESSOR, WAS PLEASED TO LEARN MORE OF USG INITIATIVES, PARTICULARLY ON HOLOCAUST COMPENSATION; THE CHANCE TO CONVERSE IN HIS NATIVE GERMAN ALSO APPEARED TO ELICIT A MORE AMIABLE ATTITUDE REGARDING A TOPIC THAT GENERALLY HAS THE VATICAN IMMEDIATELY ON THE DEFENSIVE.

18. (U) AMBASSADOR BINDENAGEL HAS CLEARED THIS CABLE.
NICHOLSON

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